Xanax: Uses, Benefits, Side Effects, and Important Safety Information

Xanax is the brand name for alprazolam, a prescription medication belonging to the benzodiazepine class. It is primarily prescribed for certain anxiety and panic disorders. Xanax works by affecting activity in the brain and nervous system, producing a calming effect.

What Is Xanax Used For?

Healthcare professionals may prescribe Xanax for anxiety disorders and panic disorder. Because benzodiazepines can lead to tolerance and dependence, they are generally used carefully and for an appropriate duration determined by a healthcare professional.

The dose and treatment plan depend on factors such as the patient's condition, medical history, age, other medications, and response to treatment.

Common Side Effects

Possible side effects of Xanax include:

- Drowsiness
- Dizziness
- Tiredness
- Impaired coordination
- Difficulty concentrating
- Memory problems

People should avoid driving or operating machinery if Xanax makes them sleepy or affects their alertness.

Xanax and Dependence

Xanax can cause physical dependence, particularly when used regularly or for an extended period. Stopping it suddenly after continued use can result in withdrawal symptoms, which may sometimes be serious.

For this reason, people taking Xanax regularly should not abruptly discontinue treatment. A healthcare professional can determine whether the dose should be reduced gradually.

Important Drug Interactions

Combining Xanax with alcohol, opioids, or other central nervous system depressants can cause profound sedation and potentially dangerous breathing problems. Always tell your doctor or pharmacist about other medicines and substances you use.

Safe Use of Xanax

Xanax should only be taken when prescribed and exactly as directed. Never share prescription medication or obtain it from an unverified source. If you have concerns about effectiveness, side effects, dependence, or stopping treatment, speak with your healthcare professional.